

Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)  
Performance Progress Report - PDG B-5 Renewal  
Quarter 1 2022 – Report Due Date: April 30, 2022

**Activity 1: Statewide Needs Assessment**

**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

*Needs Assessment Follow-up, Dissemination, and Implementation*

During Q1, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) finalized the Project A-Data Recommendations and the Project B-Family Needs Study public facing reports and completed dissemination activities. AIR hosted two 60-minute public-facing webinar presentations and two (2) 20-minute PowerPoint slide deck presentations. Additionally, AIR submitted two research briefs.

*Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out*

Since publishing [Prenatal to Three Supplement to the Illinois Risk and Reach Report](#) in the previous quarter, Erikson Institute developed a template presentation. The PN3 Supplement has been announced on social media to drive PDF downloads of the report. Presentations to stakeholders have taken place and are continuing.

**2. Problems**

*Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out*

N/A

**3. Significant findings and events**

*Needs Assessment Follow-up, Dissemination, and Implementation*

N/A

*Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out*

Presenting the data to audiences is increasing interest and questions about what the data means. The most notable data point in the report gaining attention is Developmental Screening. The data shows a significant drop in participation in FY20, which speaks to the effects of the pandemic, while pandemic data in this report only reflects four months of the pandemic (March-June 2020), it is quite telling. There is interest from audiences on whether there will be another Risk and Reach Report and PN3 Supplement.

**5. Dissemination activities**

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Needs Assessment Follow-up, Dissemination, and Implementation

The final Needs Assessment reports regarding Project A-Data Recommendations and Project B-Family Needs Study were posted on the GOECD website and distributed to GOECD's network via the monthly newsletter. The American Institutes for Research conducted public facing presentations for the following audiences-Illinois Early Learning Council, the Early Learning Council-Family Advisory Committee, Interagency Team, The Early Childhood Participation Dataset Managing Committee, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. GOECD also presented the information to the Illinois Build Initiative.

Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out

Erikson Institute developed 19 posts for Twitter and Facebook, directing audiences to download the PN3 Supplement on the riskandreach.erikson.edu website. At the time this report was written, there were 156 downloads of the Supplement. Erikson staff presented to Illinois legislators on January 24, 2022, nineteen (19) people attended the meeting. Staff also presented, in partnership with IECAM, to Raising Illinois' lead facilitating organizations on February 4, 2022, approximately 30 people were in attendance.

**6. Other Activities**

Needs Assessment Follow-up, Dissemination, and Implementation

N/A

Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out

N/A

**7. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

Needs Assessment Follow-up, Dissemination, and Implementation

This project has been completed. The goals and deliverables were met, and the contract ended on March 31, 2022.

Prenatal to Three Policy Agenda Infant/Toddler Pull-out

During Q2, dissemination activities will include presentations to the Early Childhood Interagency Team, the Partner, Plan, Act Conference, YWCA staff and external

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stakeholders. Additional social media posts will be created. Presentations to Wethe Village Coalition and Raising Illinois membership will be scheduled.

## Activity 2: Strategic Plan

### 1. Major activities and accomplishments

#### Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

Morten Group (MG) met with the Strategic Planning Council for a third meeting on January 26, 2022. At this meeting, a representative from American Institutes for Research (AIR) presented a summary of AIR's Family Needs Study and Data Recommendations reports. Council members began generating ideas on how to engage parents and the mixed delivery system at the stakeholder, institutional, and structural levels. Morten Group also shared an overview of the Strategic Planning Retreat and asked Strategic Planning Council members to review the AIR report in advance of the retreat. Two focus group sessions were held with parents on January 26, 2022, and January 27, 2022. A total of seven parents provided feedback on their experiences with the early childhood education and care system. MG compiled a high-level summary of the emerging themes relating to top priorities regarding early childhood education and care services, primary sources of information about early childhood education and care in Illinois, and characteristics of a high-quality education. This summary was shared with Strategic Planning Council members and further discussed during the Strategic Planning Retreat. Morten Group facilitated a half-day (4.5 hours) retreat on February 23, 2022. The purpose of the retreat was to advance Strategic Planning Council and GOECD staff thinking on three cross-cutting questions that have arisen in the strategic planning process: 1.) Racial Equity: How might the plan center racial equity? 2.) Progress on Current Goals: What has been learned and what is most important in continuing the work on access, coordination, quality, and workforce? 3.) Family Engagement: How might the plan support what families need to better access, trust and engage in what is a complex ECEC mixed delivery system? Morten Group provided context for each of these cross-cutting questions, and retreat participants collaboratively developed and shared their feedback and ideas. At the end of the retreat, Morten Group shared Anchor Goals for the statewide plan that are being developed further by writing groups following the retreat. Three writing groups were convened following the retreat based on the following Anchor Goals: Access: Parents increasingly select and enroll children in ECEC programs and services due to evolved cross-system coordination and pathways to maximize family participation. Quality: Parents know what to expect regarding the quality of ECEC programs and services and

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are effective, informed advocates for continuous quality improvement. Resources: Parents and families experience the benefits of equitable data-driven resources for ECEC programs and services. Each writing group will meet twice and complete the Strategic Plan template for their corresponding Anchor Goal.

Home Visiting/Child Welfare

The Home Visiting Specialist identified 57 families and referred 13 families to home visiting services. Family consent forms have been updated to revise the verbiage and include additional consent to release information to Chapin Hall for research and evaluation purposes. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) proposed a governance structure to support DCFS Home Visiting initiatives, such as training of child welfare staff and strengthening information sharing across different agencies and state entities. The structure includes a Steering Committee overseeing two subcommittees: Evaluation/Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Implementation. The Steering Committee's role includes strategic planning and coordinating cross-systems partnership, the Evaluation/CQI subcommittee will develop data-informed policies and procedures, and the Implementation subcommittee will identify needs in building a cross-systems partnership.

Analysis & Consultation for the Early Learning Council Follow-up & Implementation

Erikson Institute continue their data analysis.

Early Childhood Transformation Team

The Early Childhood Transformation Team (ECTT) continued to support the Governor's Office and the state agencies to assess opportunities and understand challenges related to governance of Illinois' early childhood education and care system. The ECTT meets with the Deputy Governor for Education and the Assistant Deputy Governor for Education on a weekly basis to discuss information and research needed to inform an ECEC governance decision. ECTT works closely with IDHS and ISBE on key aspects of their operations critical to the larger body of work, and the ECTT also participates in weekly meetings with the IDHS Division of Early Childhood to collectively think through aspects of coordination, alignment, and financing strategies for ECEC.

**2. Problems**

Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

N/A

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Home Visiting/Child Welfare Initiative

The Illinois State Board of Education's Prevention Initiative (PI) program serves as the largest funder of home visiting programs in the State. PI policies require that families enrolled in PI-funded home visiting services cannot simultaneously be enrolled in PI-funded childcare services. This results in families having to choose between home-based and center-based care. It also creates an additional barrier for families to readily enroll in services. This issue is especially concerning as families with intact cases are facing multiple risk-factors and are unable to access all the supports that they may need.

Analysis & Consultation for the Early Learning Council

Erikson Institute plans for a transition in project leadership due to fiscal issues.

Early Childhood Transformation Team

The delay in a governance decision for the state's ECEC system continues to stymie other related workstreams. The work that ECTT does in partnership with Afton Partners related to the Geographic, Equity and Adequacy Mapping was delayed due to the discontinuation of the Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 funding, which ended on December 30, 2021. The Illinois Department of Human Services established their own contract for services with Afton Partners which was finalized in March 2022.

**3. Significant findings and events**

Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

The following events and findings occurred during Q1: Events: Third Strategic Planning Council Meeting (January 26, 2022), Parent Focus Groups (January 26-27, 2022), Strategic Planning Retreat (February 23, 2022), Convening of Anchor Goal Writing Groups (April 22, 2022). Findings: As a result of pre-reading preparation, context-setting, small group work, gauging alignment, and agreement on next steps, three Anchor Goals emerged by the end of the Strategic Planning Retreat- 1.) Access: Parents increasingly select and enroll children in ECEC programs and services due to evolved cross-system coordination and pathways to maximize family participation, 2.) Quality: Parents know what to expect regarding the quality of ECEC programs and services and are effective, informed advocates for continuous quality improvement and 3.) Resources: Parents and families experience the benefits of equitable data-driven resources for ECEC programs and services.

Home Visiting/Child Welfare

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On March 3, 2022, the Home Visiting Specialist participated in the Child Welfare Protocol meeting for the Healthy Families Illinois Supervisor Group meeting.

Analysis & Consultation for the Early Learning Council

Publicly available data provides an increased understanding of the current restructuring and governance guidelines for the Early Learning Council.

Early Childhood Transformation Team

The overarching scarcity in the labor market continues to wreak havoc on the ECEC workforce and programs' attempts to re-open post-COVID-19. In the City of Chicago, the greatest impediment to enrollment is parents returning their children to congregate care settings. Downstate, the largest driver to returning enrollment to pre-pandemic numbers are the inability to hire qualified staff. Providers are reporting entry-level wages for fast food employees is \$17 dollars currently – well beyond the research-based scale that has been developed for the ECEC workforce. The working group will reconvene in April 2022 to discuss how the immediate macro-economic conditions inform the long-term salary schedule

**4. Dissemination activities**

Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

N/A

Home Visiting/Child Welfare Initiative

N/A

Analysis & Consultation for the Early Learning Council

An initial framework for the final report is completed.

Early Childhood Transformation Team

N/A

**5. Other activities**

Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

N/A

Home Visiting/Child Welfare Initiative

N/A

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Early Childhood Transformation Team

N/A

**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

Illinois PDG B-5 Strategic Plan Follow-up and Implementation

During Q2 2022, Morten Group will finalize the Illinois Statewide Strategic Plan.

Home Visiting/Child Welfare Initiative

The Home Visiting Specialist will continue to make and monitor referrals to home visiting programs; facilitate cross-training of child welfare and home visiting providers; and refine data sharing policy and procedures. Intact workers across the State will continue to engage in the statewide Families First training, including a focus on home visiting services.

Analysis and Consultation for the Early Learning Council

Erikson Institute will designate a new project lead.

Early Childhood Transformation Team

In Q2, the ECTT will complete the following deliverables- 1. Complete salary schedule for the ECEC workforce, 2. Complete 'due diligence' for decision making on ECEC governance, 3. ECTT will support ISBE in their strategies to allocate funding for Preschool for All (pending legislative approval of the proposed funding increase of \$54 million), 4. Launch the Early Childhood Special Education 'modeling' project with Public Consulting Group, ISBE and Start Early, 5. City of Chicago Every Child Ready Chicago and the Birth to Five Action Council will 'launch' their joint venture and the Council will hire a manager and 6. Finalize and present the Geographic, Equity and Adequacy Map (GEAM) to internal and external audiences.

<p><b>Activity 3: Maximizing Parent &amp; Family Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement</b></p>
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**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

In February 2022, the FAC held its first meeting of the year, 34 parents participated in the meeting. During the meeting, the FAC welcomed the American Institutes for

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Research to share the findings from the Family Needs Study. The FAC also partnered with the Illinois Birth to Five Action Council to provide outreach and recruitment for their Family Council Interest Form and process. FAC parents shared their parent networks with the Birth to Five Action Council; in turn, the Birth to Five Action Council conducted direct outreach based on the shared document. In March 2022, the FAC co-chair presented a proposal to develop a mentorship program for the FAC parent leaders. This new proposal would encourage the Early Learning Council appointed members to serve as mentors to the FAC parents. This design change would create more direct connection between the FAC and the Early Learning Council and help facilitate relationship building and leadership development.

Parent Cafés

In Q1, the Illinois Head Start Association (IHSA) Parent Café Coach provided mentoring and coaching to the 29 Parent Leaders who were trained in December 2021. The primary goal was to support their skills, knowledge, and comfort level with leading/facilitating a community-based Parent Café. A mock Parent Café was completed in early March 2022 to support the Parent Leaders who committed to taking the lead with the Parent Café held on March 10, 2022. Additionally, IHSA finalized the evaluation report from the previous cohort group and secured a Process Coach and Trainer for the fiscal year.

**2. Problems**

Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

In December 2021, Illinois Action for Children's Community Engagement Associate, who served as the Co-Chair of the Family Advisory Committee and a person who was instrumental to this work was offered an opportunity to provide expertise on family voice and engagement at the state level. As a result, Illinois Action for Children is currently searching for a new Community Engagement Associate. The position was posted in January 2022. In the meantime, the parent engagement activities and strategy as part of the FAC work is being managed by the Director of Advocacy.

Parent Cafés

N/A

**3. Significant findings and events**

Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

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N/A

Parent Cafés

A virtual Parent Café event was conducted on March 10, 2022. As noted in previous reports, Parent Cafés are more engaging when provided in-person. This finding is evident in parent feedback and participation.

**4. Dissemination activities**

Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

N/A

Parent Cafés

IHSA sponsored a virtual Parent Café on March 10, 2022. Nine Parent Leaders facilitated the Café. Approximately 14 parents attended. A debriefing meeting for the Parent Leaders was held immediately following the Parent Café to support growth and confidence. Additionally, Parent Café Guidebooks and support materials were provided to all twenty-nine Parent Leaders. A training session on the Parent Café design was sponsored during the IHSA Annual Conference. This session was recorded and will be posted on the IHSA website and within the Parent Café portal.

**5. Other activities**

Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

One of the FAC parent leaders will participate in the Partner Plan Act June 2022 Conference (Equity from the start: taking action, shifting power) Round Table discussion. This is a statewide conference that brings together early childhood community collaboration leaders and stakeholders annually. Two FAC parent leaders worked together to submit the proposal for this conference. The FAC is excited their parent proposal was accepted and look forward to sharing their knowledge and expertise with other community partners and stakeholders.

Parent Cafés

The ECE Program Parent Café Application was reviewed and revised. The application will be released in April 2022.

**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

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Early Learning Council Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

The planned activities for Q2 include: 1.) host two FAC meetings for the months of April and June and 2.) COFI will provide the following trainings- The COFI Way - Phase 3: Policy & Systems Change Series, including: Legislative Training; What is Policy Change; Working with the Media; Working with Policymakers; and Being a Leader of Leaders.

Parent Cafés

The planned activities for Q2 are to release the ECE Program Parent Café Application, plan training and resources for new cohort group of ECE programs, continue mentorship and support the engagement of Parent Leaders.

<p><b>Activity 4: Sharing Best Practices &amp; Professional Development for the Workforce</b></p>
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**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

Gateways to Opportunity Credential – Online Modules Revision

The course modularization revision project will not begin until the higher education institutions that are piloting the modules begin to report on which modules need revisions. Institutions will be administering surveys to faculty and students for their input into the revisions needed. Institutions that are piloting the Infant Toddler Credential modules include: College of Lake County, Southwestern Illinois College, Chicago State University, Roosevelt University, Erikson Institute, Heartland Community College, Northern Illinois University and National Louis University. Contracts to the consultants who will make the revisions to the modules will be executed in the second quarter when funding is released.

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

Outreach to potential state experts to be consultants on providing Competency Based Education Modularization supports was conducted. Two, and possibly three faculty experts have been selected. Discussions were held in February and March, with contract deliverables and timelines established. Contracts are in the process of being finalized/signed.

Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity

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The ECE Credential Level 2 curriculum modules (in English) were finalized and released to all faculty in February 2022. Using this as the basis, outreach to potential translators is underway to ensure accurate translation of the modules. Discussions with the national Competency-Based Education Network were held to discuss the translation of the PLA scenarios. Contract language is in development.

*Infant/Toddler Course Module Implementation*

Contracts were established with the five higher education institutions participating in Phase I of this project. Institutions include Chicago State University, Roosevelt University, Erikson Institute, Southwestern Illinois College, and College of Lake County. Questions regarding contracts and deliverables were reviewed/answered.

Each partner institution submitted a listing of courses in which they will pilot the modules and specified the term offered (e.g., spring, summer, fall) along with estimated numbers of students enrolled. The institutions that embedded modules into their spring semester courses have initiated classes and are conducting surveys with faculty and students to gain needed feedback and data.

A 2022 schedule for monthly leadership team meetings, and a schedule for monthly large group meetings (inclusive of the leadership team and faculty from all partnering institutions) was established.

*Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation (Name Changed)*

Outreach to the national Competency Based Education Network (C-BEN) was conducted to engage and confirm interest in partnering in the proposed 2022 project, review goals and deliverables. A contract outline was established along with timelines, the contract language is in final stages of revision.

A planning meeting was held with representatives from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NCCRRA) to review the 2021 Prior Learning Assessment project report recommendations. It was decided to schedule a meeting with Illinois Community College Board representatives in the 2nd quarter to discuss opportunities to mitigate challenges identified.

Statewide outreach was conducted with higher education institutions who indicated an interest during the December 2021 Showcase in implementing Prior Learning

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Assessment during the 2022 calendar year. Each institution was contacted to confirm interest and to share the timeline for this work that begins spring 2022.

*Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization*

A Request for Proposal was developed and disseminated to the 29 higher education institutions currently entitled for the Gateways Illinois Director Credential on March 3, 2022. Responses are due April 22, 2022. State and national expert consultants were identified, outreach was conducted. Timelines and deliverables are currently being finalized to develop contract language.

*Gateways: Linkage Project*

INCCRRA is maintaining capacity within the Gateways Registry to record an ISBE educator's identification number on an individual's Gateways Registry profile. This field will be used to link records between the Gateways system and ISBE's data system.

*Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model Trainers & Coaches*

In Q1, local delivery of Pyramid Model trainings continued to be submitted and scheduled through Gateways; registry-approved trainings and professional development trainings offered by PMC were entered into the Gateways system for ongoing tracking. INCCRRA recruited four new Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies to participate in the next phase of the implementation pilot. Child care implementation sites have gathered Leadership Teams data and collected baseline Early Childhood Benchmark of Quality data points, program and practitioner coaching logs and TPOTs. As the 2021-22 school year ends, sites will gather the second set of the above data.

*Gateways: Credential Fees*

Information about the credential fee waiver was posted on the Gateways website and shared throughout the statewide CCR&R system structure. The early childhood workforce in Illinois continues to submit Gateways Credential applications at a high rate of response to take advantage of the financial support provided by this credential fee waiver. During this first quarter from January to March of 2022, there were 2,281 credential applications received resulting in the use of 1,581 credential fee waivers. (Some applicants apply for the Infant Toddler Credential which does not require an additional waiver). Of these applications, 930 credentials were awarded to 757 distinct individuals. (Some applicants qualify for more than one credential). Fifty-three percent of the Credential Fee waiver funding was utilized during Q1.

*Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System*

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During Q1, intensive professional learning and technical assistance was conducted with three (3) QRIS Pilot child care providers. Early CHOICES shifted to a Community of Practice (COP) Model setting monthly standing meeting times which occurred in January, February, and March. The evaluation of last year's Community of Practice for Professional Development Providers is complete. Expanding the work beyond the COP to increase knowledge in the field is recommended but the capacity to do that and the sustainability strategy needs to be determined. Work with three (3) Community Inclusion Teams (CIT) in Mannheim, Collinsville, and Springfield continues with monthly meetings. Early CHOICES supported the leadership teams in planning for coaching and implementation. Practice Based Coaching training was completed, and onsite coaches began in January 2022. Early CHOICES completed the Inclusive Classroom Profile in each program and provided the data to the coaches to begin the process. Each site developed individual goals related to implementation.

*Pyramid Module Implementation*

In Q1, implementation site programs were provided ongoing Process Coaching and access to the following trainings: Behavior Incident Report System (January 18, 2022), Practice Based Coaching in a Group (January 26-27, 2022), Inclusion Series #3 (February 4, 2022), Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Families (February 17, 2022), Practice Based Coaching Peer to Peer (February 23-24, 2022), and Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (March 24-25, 2022). Five additional CCR&Rs were identified to build their capacity to support implementation. Meetings continued with IECMHC state-wide system (Caregiver Connections) leadership to continue supporting the integration of mental health consultation with the Pyramid Model.

*Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)*

In Q1, Head Start/Early Head Start Level I FAN Training facilitated by training candidates with observation and support from FAN Lead Trainer began January 6, 2022. Mentoring calls began in February 2022. Mentoring will continue monthly until August 2022. FAN Materials Development (to tailor FAN curriculum for center-based programs) began February 2, 2022. The first meeting was facilitated by FAN's Executive Director Dr. Linda Gilkerson and stakeholders from ISBE, Head Start and Child Care.

*Post-Secondary Cohorts*

During Q1, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) completed execution of the amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois State Board of Education. IBHE also completed amendments for the existing Intergovernmental Agreements with each of the five institutional grantees (Joliet Junior College, Lewis

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University, National Louis University, Quincy University, and Western Illinois University). These amendments were fully executed, and work is underway to disburse funds in April 2022. A quarterly call was held with each grantee institution.

## 2. Problems

Gateways to Opportunity Credential - Online Modules Revision

N/A

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

N/A

Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity

N/A

Infant Toddler Course Module Implementation

N/A

Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation

N/A

Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization

N/A

Gateways: Linkage Project

Due to different state agency rules and protocols, the data sharing conversations are moving slowly.

Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model (PM) Trainers and Coaches

Staffing challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic continue in community-based child care programs.

Gateways: Credential Fees

N/A

Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System

Lack of response/ participation from one child care agency continues. The provider has expressed interest but does not follow up when given clear steps to commit to the process.

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Pyramid Model Implementation

N/A

Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)

N/A

Postsecondary Cohorts

N/A

**3. Significant findings and events**

Gateways to Opportunity Credential - Online Modules Revision

N/A

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

N/A

Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity

A survey was sent to all Illinois higher education institutions to gauge existing capacity to serve Spanish speaking students. Several institutions responded and have indicated an interest in providing expanded services to multi-lingual students. Institutions that are being considered for partnership include: College of Lake County, City Colleges of Chicago (Truman), Harper College, Joliet Junior College, Oakton Community College, St. Augustine College, National Louis University, Millikin University, and Western Illinois University.

Infant Toddler Course Module Implementation

An initial meeting to review the overall project and establish timelines, roles and responsibilities was held with the leadership team of the Infant Toddler Course Modularization Pilot Project. The leadership team met with faculty from all the partnering institutions to review the ITC project. Information was shared by each institution regarding planned implementation and consultants answered questions from faculty. The use of the survey tools was highlighted as an important data instrument.

Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation

N/A

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Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization

N/A

Gateways: Linkage Project

N/A

Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model (PM) Trainers and Coaches

The Year 2 report shows valuable and promising results despite ongoing challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic. Dissemination of the Year 2 report will occur through the development of infographics that are targeted at both broad and more targeted audiences.

Gateways: Credential Fees

There continues to be an increase in credential applications received at INCCRRA. In Q1, there was a one hundred-fifty percent increase in applications compared to the first quarter of 2021. The continued high rate of response from the field validates that the \$65 credential application fee is a significant barrier to the (underpaid) early care and education workforce.

Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System

The Communities of Practice with child care providers has been warmly welcomed and they have provided positive feedback. Early CHOICES has noticed an increase in skills and engagement of the participants. Planning is underway for a follow-up survey to learn participants perspectives on what worked and what needs are not yet met. Capacity to sustain cross-systems professional development and extending support throughout the CCR&Rs has been shared with IDHS and the Early Childhood Transformation Team.

Pyramid Model Implementation

N/A

Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)

A summary of feedback for the Head Start/Early Head Start Level I FAN Training in January 2022 was positive, the participants expressed the training increased their understanding regarding actively listening with empathy, listening, and exploring before jumping into finding solutions, practicing pauses, and holding space for parents' full emotions rather than trying to comfort.

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Postsecondary Cohorts

N/A

**4. Dissemination activities**

Gateways to Opportunity Credential – Online Modules Revision

N/A

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

N/A

Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity

A survey to determine institutions with Spanish-speaking students and well-developed resources/supports was distributed to sixty-six (66) higher education institutions that are entitled for the Gateways ECE Credential Level 2.

Infant Toddler Course Module Implementation

The final report from Year 2 was shared in the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development newsletter and website.

Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation

N/A

Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was developed and distributed to Illinois higher education institutions.

Gateway Registry: Linkage Project

N/A

Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model Trainers & Coaches

Once approved, dissemination of the Year 2 report will occur through briefs and/or infographics which target specific audiences.

Gateways: Credential Fees

The Gateways website is a key mechanism to publicize credential application fee waivers. Incoming applications exceeded goals without mass marketing or advertising

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targeting the credential fee waiver. The targeted goal was to receive fifteen hundred applications by March 31, 2022. This goal was surpassed on March 18, 2022, as more than eighteen hundred applications were received.

Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System

During Q1, the following dissemination activities occurred-Early Choices presented at Illinois Head Start Association Conference regarding Community Inclusion Teams, submitted the proposal to present at the National Early Childhood Inclusion Conference, and the proposal to present at the Partner, Plan Act Conference in June 2022 was submitted and accepted.

Pyramid Model Implementation

PMC continued to disseminate the model to programs throughout the State via the ePyramid modules.

Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)

N/A

Postsecondary Cohorts

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) is nearing completion on a Year 2 summative report. This document, along with a 2021-2022 summary of cohort demographics and a fall 2021 survey of participants will be shared with GOECD.

**5. Other activities**

Gateways to Opportunity Credential – Online Modules Revision

N/A

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

N/A

Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity

N/A

Infant Toddler Course Module Implementation

N/A

Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation

N/A

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Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization

N/A

Gateway Registry: Linkage Project

N/A

Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model Trainers & Coaches

N/A

Gateways: Credential Fees

N/A

Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System

Early CHOICES continues to explore opportunities to implement cross-sector professional development on inclusion and they are planning additional cross-sector opportunities to maximize *Understanding Inclusion* online modules.

Pyramid Model Implementation

PMC is in the process of collecting and indexing Pyramid Model materials available in Spanish.

Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)

While the PDG B-5 grant does not explicitly fund Erikson Institute's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, this project will continue to be informed and improved by Erikson's FAN Team DEI initiatives.

Postsecondary Cohorts

N/A

**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

Gateways to Opportunity Credential – Online Modules Revision

The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral (INCCRRA) will work to contract the consultants who will make the revisions to the modules. This will be executed in the second quarter when funding is released.

Competency-Based Education (CBE) Modularization

The Illinois Network of Childcare Resource and Referral (INCCRRA) is working on identify and contract with Faculty Consultant(s) to manage the curriculum.

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*Diverse Workforce Supports for Equity*

In quarter 1 of 2022, INCCRRA will: subcontract for 3 two-hour virtual training deliveries (each training to be delivered twice); Implement two Professional Learning Groups; Training Delivery of two-day Diversity-Informed Workshops; and provide ongoing logistics, and technology supports and data tracking of professional development events.

*Infant Toddler Course Module Implementation*

"Lessons learned" from the ECE Credential Competency pilot, which is now concluding, are being captured and will be used to inform the launch of the pilot for the Infant Toddler Credential Competency work planned for 2022.

*Prior Learning Assessment Mursion License & Implementation*

A meeting will be scheduled with Illinois Community College Board representatives in the 2nd quarter to discuss opportunities to mitigate challenges identified.

*Illinois Director Credential Competency Course Modularization*

The Illinois Network of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies will draft and send RFP to entitled higher education institutions regarding the IDC modularization project.

*Gateway Registry: Linkage Project*

In Q2, INCCRRA will work with IDHS and ISBE partners to meet and discuss a data sharing agreement that would allow for a limited scope data sharing project as a proof of concept to develop and test the data system enhancements (e.g., APIs, web service calls, etc.) that will be used to support the data sharing.

*Gateways Registry: Pyramid Model Trainers & Coaches*

In Q2, INCCRRA will: maintain the database of Registry-Approved Pyramid Model trainings; continue support and administration of Relationship Based Professional Development within child care programs; continue evaluation data analysis and reporting; and continue evaluation of Pyramid Model Implementation Sites and professional development events.

*Gateways: Credential Fees*

Monies in Year 3 will continue the support of the waived credential fees for the early care and education workforce in Illinois. A comprehensive report will be submitted to GOECD regarding Year 2 credential fees.

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Early CHOICES Inclusion Professional Development System

In Q2, Early CHOICES will continue Community of Practice (CoP) meetings with ExceleRate Pilot sites as well as monthly meetings with CIT leaders.

Pyramid Model Implementation

In Q2, Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) will continue dissemination of eModule codes, virtual live training events, and monthly Process Coach calls for child care sites. PMC will also continue Process Coach support for CCR&R agencies.

Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training (FAN)

In Q2, the cohort of Supervisor FAN training (Supervisor/Practitioner) will continue for the twenty supervisors; a Train-the-Trainer for Practitioner FAN will continue to expand Head Start's capacity to provide FAN training to direct-service staff after the grant ends.

Postsecondary Cohorts

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will continue to work with grantees during Year 3 of implementation.

<p>Activity 5: Improving Quality/Service Integration, Expanding Access</p>
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**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

ExceleRate Tiered QRIS/Tiered Funding Pilot

During Q1, the 35 participating child care centers continued to test the revised funding model. Based on their experience, an updated minimum salary scale will be implemented for State Fiscal Year 2023. The new, higher salaries are designed to be more competitive with other business sectors. The directors are participating in one-on-one monthly meetings and a monthly Community of Practice (CoP) with the McCormick Center. As a result, the directors reported they are learning new ideas and skills to further Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) activities and improve the implementation of the Plan-Do-Review process throughout their programs.

ExceleRate Pilot: Online Payroll Reporting System

During Q1, the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) continued to develop a database for electronic annual budget creation that

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will be utilized in Q2 to create FY23 budgets and to allow electronic submission of monthly billings beginning in Q3.

*ExceleRate Family Child Care Pilot*

In Q1, the Family Child Care Pilot expanded from three to five Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies. All five agencies developed budgets and workplans. The three continuing agencies worked with their local peer-led family child care associations to build on Year 2 work, and the three new agencies worked with their local associations to plan more intentional coordination, along with CCR&R support for association leader development and Communities of Practice. Results will inform the revision of QRIS standards for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).

*Community Planning for Expansion*

During Q1, three additional planning groups in high-need, underserved communities completed their plans to attract and administer expanded public funding for ECEC. The remaining planning group in Cohort 1 is expected to complete the process in April 2022. Cohort 2 communities continued capacity building for their collaborations, with a focus on parent engagement as part of the planning process.

**2. Problems**

*ExceleRate Tiered QRIS/Tiered Funding Pilot*

During Q1, the child care centers continued to experience COVID-19 cases and experienced additional quarantines impacting their progress with project reporting. Most centers have been able to keep pace with project activities, but a few have fallen behind meeting reporting deadlines. GOECD increased technical assistance (TA) support and reporting reminders to address reporting challenges.

*ExceleRate Pilot: Online Payroll Reporting System*

During Q1, INCCRRA continued to experience competing priorities impacting their database completion timeline. As such, the database budget testing will begin in Q2 and is expected to be fully operational by the end of Q2. Likewise, database monthly payroll testing will begin in Q3 and is expected to be fully operational by the end of Q4.

*ExceleRate Family Child Care Pilot*

N/A

*Community Planning for Expansion*

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Workforce shortages across early childhood education and care continue to impact communities' ability to plan for expansion. Many communities do not have enough teachers to fully staff current programs and classrooms.

### **3. Significant findings and events**

#### *ExceleRate Tiered QRIS/Tiered Funding Pilot*

The funding model is sustainable and scalable; and is being utilized to inform the salary schedule development work of the State's Early Childhood Transformation Team. In addition, centers report that the technical assistance (TA) provided by GOECD and the McCormick Center has significantly improved their ability to engage in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) practices.

#### *ExceleRate Family Child Care Pilot*

N/A

#### *Community Planning for Expansion*

The planning groups in Cohort 2 are working in conjunction with the State's emerging system of regional supports for community planning and coordination, called Birth to Five Action Councils. This PDG B-5 project is helping to inform that new initiative.

### **4. Dissemination activities**

#### *ExceleRate Tiered QRIS/Tiered Funding Pilot*

GOECD, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the State's Early Childhood Transformation Team co-facilitated statewide focus groups with child care directors to receive salary scale feedback on the salary schedule being developed based on pilot project findings. GOECD and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) continued to meet monthly, to prepare to transition the funding support from PDG B-5 to IDHS.

#### *ExceleRate Family Child Care Pilot*

N/A

#### *Community Planning for Expansion*

N/A

### **5. Other activities – N/A**

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**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

*ExceleRate Tiered QRIS/Tiered Funding Pilot*

In Q2, GOECD will continue to focus on sustainability, scalability, and evaluation. GOECD and IDHS will meet every two weeks to ensure a smooth transition from PDG B-5 to other, ongoing funding streams and to management by IDHS. Starting in July 2022 (Q3), IDHS ongoing child care funding will replace PDG B-5 funding for rate payments supporting child care center staffing and salaries. PDG B-5 funds will continue to fund administration and professional supports. The McCormick Center will continue working on job-embedded professional development opportunities to encourage Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) activities.

*ExceleRate Pilot: Online Payroll Reporting System*

In Q2, INCCRRA will continue database development in preparation for transition of funding and administration to IDHS. INCCRRA will introduce training and technical assistance support for directors on database utilization.

*ExceleRate Family Child Care Pilot*

In Q2, activity coordination between CCR&R agencies and local peer-led family child care associations will continue. In addition, leadership development activities and Communities of Practice will take place as planned.

*Community Planning for Expansion*

In Q2, the final Cohort 1 community will complete its community plan. Workshops and planning will continue in Cohort 2 communities.

<p><b>Activity 6: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Data Use for Continuous Improvement</b></p>
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**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

*DHS – Data System Integration in Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting*

During Q1, the CPRD Data Supports Team, a representative from Start Early HFS model trainer, and a program expert held weekly meetings with Visit Tracker data system staff to prioritize and support HFI program data collection and reporting needs. Q1 projects developed in VT included: 1. Building the Family Resource and Opportunities for Growth Scale (released January 28, 2022) 2. HFI Service Plan (released March 14, 2022) 3. Building a data entry section for Child Welfare involvement (released January 3, 2022)

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to monitor progress on IL Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA); a report was also developed and released. 4. Building a way to track families with Doula services (released March 14, 2022) 5. HV completion vs. expected report (in progress) -CPRD Data Specialist offered a webinar on January 19, 2022, on Form 1 MIECHV – Demographics and followed up with individual calls with 31 programs during the weeks of January 24, 2022, through March 4, 2022. Programs were encouraged to continue to run Form 1 each month and continually work to keep demographic data clean. Three materials were developed and shared with Local Implementing Agencies (LIAs) during this quarter.

*IECAM - Data Accessibility & Literacy*

IECAM data staff participated in multiple trainings and workshops with IBM and stakeholders from around the state. Staff continue to pursue trainings at the University of Illinois on python, Tableau, and data visualizations. The IGA between ISBE and the University of Illinois/IECAM was executed in March 2022. The sub-award between Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map and Chapin Hall (University of Chicago) has been finalized and is being processed as of March 30, 2022. The consultancy award between Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map and Dr. Farivar (University of Illinois Adjunct Faculty) has been finalized and is being processed as of March 30, 2022.

*DoIT Data Linkage & LDS 2.0 Functionality*

In Q1, major activities related to the PDG B-5 grant included the renewal of the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) which was executed on January 26, 2022. The legal framework to allow all agencies to connect data with the Cloud Pak for Data (CP4D), including execution of the data management agreement between the ISBE and DoIT as well as the Data Access and Use Agreement between the Department of Human Services (DHS), ISBE, and GOECD was developed. Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) was identified as the contractor for the Early Childhood Participation Dataset project. DoIT continued the development of the creation of users and implementation of the Unified Data and Project Request process. Ongoing development continues with budget and organization for long-term sustainability

*NIU - Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) Alignment with ILDS & State Regional Council System*

In collaboration its subcontractor Third Sector Intelligence (3Si), the NIU team stood up an initial cloud instance for CECIDS and began ingesting initial data from Chicago-based

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CECIDS data sources. The team has identified the initial CECIDS data products and engaged various State stakeholders in early discussions around how the Chicago-centric products might be translated to other parts of the state.

*NIU Early Childhood Participation Database and ILDS 2.0 Functionality*

The NIU team continued preparations for ingesting the initial ISBE data into the ILDS Cloud Pak for Data environment to support creation of the Early Childhood Participation Dataset. The team drafted and solicited State agency input on various legal agreements supporting governance and data access activities for ILDS 2.0. It also created initial wireframes for a revamped ILDS website.

*NIU - Data Modeling & Demographic Crosswalk*

The NIU team participated in recent discussions around the need for aligning programmatic and technical definitions in early childhood. It prepared to ingest ISBE early childhood data in the ILDS Cloud Pak for Data environment to support creation of a model underlying the Early Childhood Participation Dataset.

## **2. Problems**

*DHS – Data System Integration in Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting*

After trainings, one on one calls were conducted (instead of group calls) to give more tailored 1:1 support to local implementing agencies (LIA) and their staff. Specific questions were addressed during or after the calls. It was difficult to schedule one on one calls with a few programs that had staff changes. One program missed the individual call for Form 1 and did not reschedule.

*IECAM - Data Accessibility & Literacy*

Although not directly related to this project, the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map is waiting for a new data sharing agreement to be negotiated between Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map. This will impact future work in CY2022. As of March 30, 2022, the project was still waiting for several staff to be assigned credentials as authorized users.

*DoIT Data Linkage & LDS 2.0 Functionality*

Discussions continue regarding the automation of the Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA) Key process for DHS. Challenges include data transformation, cleansing, and integrating data from multiple sources and multiple agencies to provide an environment for analysis.

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NIU - Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) Alignment with ILDS & State Regional Council System

N/A

NIU - Early Childhood Participation Database and ILDS 2.0 Functionality

The NIU team encountered delays related to legal agreement execution and Cloud Pak for Data service upgrades.

NIU - Data Modeling & Demographic Crosswalk

The NIU team encountered delays related to legal agreement execution and Cloud Pak for Data service upgrades.

### **3. Significant findings and events**

DHS – Data System Integration in Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting

A summary of the data calls was shared with DHS on March 9, 2022. DHS HFI programs made an effort to clean up their demographic data, specifically adult participant education, employment, housing, insurance, and priority population numbers. Sites were able to utilize a document titled “Where to update Data Guide” to assist with data entry. Several documents were shared with LIAs during and after the Form 1 training: Instructions for running Form 1, Where to Update Data guide, and the slide deck from the training.

IECAM Data Accessibility & Literacy

The Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map and Chapin Hall developed a brief slide deck describing the (1) definition, advantages, and limitations of longitudinal data and (2) way in which data can be integrated to create datasets from which to answer questions. This was presented to stakeholders and state agency leads in February 2022.

DoIT Data Linkage & LDS 2.0 Functionality

CloudPak for Data not only provides a set of technologies that allow agencies to maintain control of their data, but also to connect and share their data so it can be better used for analysis. An initial needs assessment was completed to identify data gaps and conflicts with the goal to improve definitions of services and improve coordination of data systems while ensuring privacy.

NIU - Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) Alignment with ILDS & State Regional Council System

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The initial iteration of CECIDS exists—as a cloud instance and governance entity—and contains data.

NIU - Data Modeling & Demographic Crosswalk

N/A

NIU - Early Childhood Participation Database and ILDS 2.0 Functionality

Execution of legal agreements is necessary to enable creation of the Early Childhood Participation Dataset.

**4. Dissemination activities**

DHS – Data System Integration in Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting

Progress in Form 1 demographics was shared with IDHS on March 9, 2022, highlighting decrease in missing data from December 2021 through February 2022, before and after the training and one on one calls on Form 1. CPRD reported DHS HFI participant numbers to IDHS (last month of the quarter) and IECAM (FFY21 new enrollment by county sent December 2022). CPRD met with NIU to discuss submitting IL DHS HFI data (new children enrolled with demographics) to the ILDS starting in April 2022.

IECAM Data Accessibility & Literacy

The Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map and Chapin developed a one-page description of a possible end-user product for dissemination. The Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map Director participated in a panel presentation on the data integration project ILDS 2.0 for the Head Start State Conference March 9, 2022.

Data Modeling & Demographic Crosswalk

N/A

DoIT Data Linkage & LDS 2.0 Functionality

Bi-weekly discussions between GOECD, DoIT, Governor's Office, and ISBE have continued in order to develop the project. Additional collaborators in the project have been added to the discussions such as DHS, IECAM, and Head Start.

Early Childhood Participation Database and ILDS 2.0 Functionality

N/A

**5. Other activities**

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N/A

**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

*DHS – Data System Integration in Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting*

In Q2, the following deliverables will be completed: Work with IDHS staff and DataKeeper to develop new reports for the HFI program; train and support IDHS HFI staff in learning the Visit Tracker system so it can be used for monitoring and quality assurance; provide technical assistance, support and training to HFI programs through regular calls with HFI program staff, development and dissemination of training material, and troubleshooting; develop a plan with IDHS Leadership, the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map, Northern Illinois University, and the Electronic Data Warehouse to provide HFI data in the formats required for ILDS and other early childhood data initiatives.

*IECAM - Data Accessibility & Literacy*

In Q2, IECAM will complete the following deliverables: 1.) appropriate staff will become authorized users in CloudPak, 2.) authorized users/staff will begin to work in CloudPak with the CCMS and EI data, 3.) an integrated dataset with available CCMS and EI data in CloudPak will be developed, 4) the process of developing a catalogue of data elements and definitions will begin so that the gaps and inconsistencies may be addressed through collaboration with the data source, 5.) a framework for assessing high quality data will be developed to assist in the formation of both the catalogue and the integrated dataset and 6.) tools will be developed on the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map Development site—to be assessed with focus groups and demonstrations to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and stakeholders.

*DoIT Data Linkage & LDS 2.0 Functionality*

The following deliverables will be completed in Q2: 1.) complete initial steps to design approach to data integration, 2.) support agencies in loading data into the ILDS 2.0 standardized analysis platform, 3.) provide technical assistance in the creation of data dictionaries, standardization of demographic variables, and data manipulation to support needed analysis.

*NIU - Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) Alignment with ILDS & State Regional Council System*

In Q2, the following deliverables will be completed: 1.) ingest and process various, selected data sets in CECIDS and 2.) deploy initial CECIDS data

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product-operational dashboards for Head Start recipients.

NIU - Data Modeling & Demographic Crosswalk

In Q2, NIU will ingest ISBE early childhood data in Cloud Pak for Data to support modeling of integrated data.

NIU - Early Childhood Participation Database and ILDS 2.0 Functionality

The planned activities for Q2 include the following: 1.) ingest ISBE early childhood data in Cloud Pak for Data to support modeling of integrated data, 2.) finalize wireframes, draft copy, and establish domain for revamped ILDS website and 3.) execute ILDS governance agreement amendment adding the Illinois Head Start Association as a member of ILDS governance

<b>Bonus Activities</b>
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**1. Major activities and accomplishments**

IRIS Implementation and TA

All four communities are actively using the Integrated Referral and Intake System platform to send and receive referrals as well as onboarding new partners into the system. Sauk Valley STARS has onboarded 48 partners and have sent 57 referrals; the DuPage Home Visiting Network has onboarded 12 partners and sent 120 referrals; Sangamon HEART has onboarded 16 partners and sent 14 referrals; and the Madison County Coordinated Intake community has onboarded 11 partners and sent 21 referrals. All communities are finalizing their annual goal with measurable objectives that are focused on strengthening their capacities.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers

In Q1, a Request for Proposal was utilized to identify a subcontract to deliver three (3) two-hour trainings; each training offered twice per month. The identified training topics include Training 1: Self-Awareness/Inner Work of Social Justice, Training 2: Root Causes of Racial Inequity, and Training 3: Equity and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. Recruitment is underway for two facilitators for Professional Learning Groups, and the two-day Diversity-Informed Tenets workshop is scheduled to take place June 15, 2022.

I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice

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In Q1, INCCRRA held the I/ECMHC Orientation series, which includes FAN training on February 22 – March 3, 2022, with 17 attendees. Diversity-Informed Tenets trainings have been scheduled for June 30th and December 6th, 2022. The Reflective Learning Groups (RLG) continued with INCCRRA supporting seven facilitators for eight RLGs. Revision of RLG Interest Form and Overview to gather more information to place in appropriate RLG. The RLG Facilitator Quarterly meeting was held on February 9, 2022. The I/ECMHC Quarterly Meeting was held on January 27, 2022, with 62 attendees. The I/ECMHC Quarterly Meeting will be held during the Annual Symposium for I/ECMH Consultants on May 11, 2022. The I/ECMH Consultant Outcomes Ad Hoc Committee met on February 14, 2022, to gather additional information about what data are being collected and how outcomes are demonstrated in different sectors. Data collection and reporting are not required to the same extent across sectors.

*Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades*

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): In Q1, WADI completed the post survey data results of the parent training on Conscious Discipline. The Transition Support Specialist created Kindergarten transition folders for all WADI sites. Staff were trained on how to complete transition packets with families and continued to work on the Conscious Discipline online training regarding SEL in Adults.
- United Way – East St. Louis: During Q1, the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership carried out the following activities: 1.) development and launch of standard annual calendar of events, which will include spring and fall early childhood development events and summer school enrollment events for early learning and kindergarten classrooms. 2.) School District 189 approval of a kindergarten transitions survey to determine the annual and ongoing impact of kindergarten transitions activities, which will be implemented in classrooms in early May 2022. 3.) identification and approval of a vendor who will author and illustrate a local book on kindergarten readiness and success. 4.) draft manuscript for kindergarten readiness and success book.
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): In Q1, ACPN's cohort of ten child care providers regularly participated in trainings and individualized coaching sessions with the Child Care to Kindergarten trainer/coach regarding Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold. ACT/ACPN also engaged the Chicago community, Altgeld–Riverdale, more intentionally to learn about their best practices for kindergarten transition. ACT/ACPN continued to meet with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) on a quarterly basis to discuss goals and ways to interact with

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local community schools. It is important to note that ACT/ACPN's priority is to maintain focus on trainings and coaching with family childcare providers and collaboration with CPS being secondary. The MOU drafted between ACT, ACPN, and CPS is meant to solidify the partnership and is pending approval by CPS. ACPN worked with the CPS Office of Diverse Learner Supports and Services (ODLSS) to ensure they can assist family childcare providers with the appropriate training and supports for children with developmental concerns. Using ACPN's training center, they are collaborating with ODLSS to screen children who may have special needs. ACPN and ODLSS have confirmed screening sessions in April, May, and June.

- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): The major activities for Q1 included three teacher transition team workshops and the hiring of one Family Liaison. During the team workshops, the teachers participated in professional development trainings. The trainings covered teacher trauma related to the pandemic, family engagement and supports, and attendance practices and protocols. BPI also began the groundwork for sustainability planning by meeting with Chicago Public Schools and the community collaborative Austin Coming Together.

## 2. Problems

### IRIS Implementation and TA

One community is experiencing challenges receiving referrals from their local Early Intervention Child Family Connections office. Another community is not eligible for the Department of Human Services-Division of Early Childhood's Home Visiting funding opportunity; other funding options are not available until July 2023; therefore, they are currently researching sustainable funding options.

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers

Scheduling events has been challenging due to multiple professional development opportunities taking place.

### I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice

N/A

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Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): WADI continues to experience a staff shortage.
- United Way – East St. Louis: N/A
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): N/A
- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): BPI reported, due to the pandemic, it has been extremely difficult to recruit a Family Liaison. It has also been difficult for the local child care centers in the Altgeld/Riverdale community to recruit sufficient staff to cover classrooms so teachers may attend the team meetings. The Transition Team workshops were well attended; however, it was difficult for some teachers to attend due to the staff shortage. Teachers shared that they like the option to use the Zoom platform. BPI recognized those who attend the workshops are only a sample of the educators at each center or school. Each representative from the centers or schools is encouraged to share information learned and strategies to work on with their Pre-K through 1<sup>st</sup> grade teams. BPI developed accountability measures to support these representative educators and to aide in their knowledge of information shared across the community. The teachers are overworked, stressed, and find it difficult to carve out time for this additional work. BPI hopes to refine this practice over the course of the next year. They also recognize the need to be sensitive to the current landscape of school supports and stressors.

**3. Significant findings and events**

IRIS Implementation and TA Support

On February 22, 2022, Illinois' first statewide Integrated Referral and Intake System Learning Community was facilitated by the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers

N/A

I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice

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The orientation was changed to an 8-day format with sessions held in the morning over two weeks. The revised format and scheduling of orientation was well received by participants.

*Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades*

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): WADI's Program Director has a scheduled meeting with John A. Logan College on April 28, 2022, to discuss collaboration as two of the colleges in WADI's service area discontinued their early childhood education program due to low enrollment. John A. Logan is a community college outside of WADI's service area, however, they contacted WADI to ask what their college could do for them to recruit new students for their early childhood education program and in turn, they would link students to WADI for future employment.
- United Way – East St. Louis: Through partnership with GOECD, the Early Learning Partnership will be a part of the Early Childhood Participation Dataset pilot, which will include scoping for development of a local data infrastructure and result in a plan for future implementation.
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): ACT/ACPN worked with several community stakeholders to create broader awareness about the importance of early learning, and the PDG B-5 Kindergarten Transition Project. The program's goal is to develop long-term strategies around creating a seamless transition to kindergarten for early learners. The cohort members expressed concerns on their ability to implement the curriculum and analyze the assessment tool, including members who attended past trainings regarding Creative Curriculum. ACPN discussed the types of strategies needed to support those concerns.
- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): BPI has established trusting relationships over the years through their Teacher Transition Team. The educators expressed, they value the Professional Learning Community that has been built over the past 8 years and they are invested in moving forward with the work.

**4. Dissemination activities**

*IRIS Implementation and TA Support*

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In February, the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research disseminated the Business Service Agreements to the four communities that included contract deliverables and total funding amount.

*Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers*

Request for Proposals were disseminated through the Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health Listserv and other agencies that have background in training on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Information on the project was shared with identified Equity Leaders that included: Reflective Learning Group Facilitators, Orientation Presenters, and Reflective Supervisors.

*I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice*

INCCRRA continues to disseminate all registration information for I/ECMHC professional development opportunities and events through a variety of sources. Promotion and dissemination of information on the I/ECMHC database is ongoing.

*Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades*

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): WADI provided Conscious Discipline instruction to families enrolled in the center-based and home-based programs. Additionally, the staff continued training in Conscious Discipline.
- United Way – East St. Louis: Although community-wide dissemination has not yet taken place, the coalition has shared a draft kindergarten readiness video and public awareness campaign messaging with coalition work groups and at local events. These materials are meant to make definitions of kindergarten readiness more accessible to families and will include actionable items.
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): ACT/ACPN developed a one-page document to promote the PDG B-5 Kindergarten Transition Project and provide a brief overview to prospective partners. ACT is working with ACPN's marketing/development team to create social media presence and generate stories about this project. They also plan to leverage their relationships with local media outlets for coverage on their work.
- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): N/A

**5. Other activities**

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IRIS Implementation and TA Support

N/A

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers

N/A

I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice

N/A

Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): WADI will develop surveys to distribute to families regarding kindergarten readiness. A pre-survey regarding Conscious Discipline will also be sent to families during the month of April 2022.
- United Way – East St. Louis: N/A
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): ACPN is working with an evaluator on completing a family survey to understand what families know about the kindergarten process, how they should market the information on kindergarten transitions, and how to train the childcare providers on providing the kindergarten transition information.
- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): N/A

**6. Activities planned for the next reporting period**

IRIS Implementation and TA Support

In Q2, the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research will continue to provide technical assistance support to the four communities. They will create resources and articles covering the development of the Integrated Referral and Intake System in Illinois. They will also facilitate another statewide IRIS Learning Community. The four communities will have executed their Business Service Agreements and finalized their annual community goals.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Professional Learning Groups for I/ECMHC T&TA Providers

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In Q2, INCCRRA will support the delivery of first training event, implementation of the first 2 Professional Learning Groups, compensation of trainer, facilitators, and consultants, support the delivery of two-day Diversity-Informed Tenets workshop and provide logistical supports: training information/announcements, registration, technical assistance, data entry.

*I/ECMHC Database, Orientation, and Reflective Practice*

In Q2, INCCRRA will: maintain Professional Development Coordinator; deliver orientation events (inclusive of FAN and Diversity Informed Tenants); maintain Reflective Learning Groups; provide for State System Communications and Connectors; provide ongoing logistics, supports, and technology for professional development delivery and data tracking; support and maintain the statewide I/ECMH Consultant database through the Gateways Registry; implement, support, and maintain the I/ECMH Consultation Activity Tracker database; identify requirements around outcomes data tracking and pilot with a group of consultants; and produce I/ECMHC reports and resources.

*Collaborative Transition & Alignment from Birth to the Early Grades*

- Wabash Area Development (WADI): In Q2, WADI will send pre and post surveys regarding Conscious Discipline to the participants enrolled in the program.
- United Way – East St. Louis: In Q2, United Way-East St. Louis plans to: host the professional development series focusing on social emotional learning, storytelling/literacy, and inclusion as part of Week of the Young Child. United Way of Greater East St. Louis will also conduct two (2) Community Cafes. The program will launch its kindergarten transition survey and host focus groups regarding its kindergarten readiness and success book.
- Austin Coming Together (ACT): In Q2, ACT and ACPN will complete the following deliverables: Continue conducting training and coaching with cohort of child care providers, develop and distribute midpoint surveys to families and teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the kindergarten transition initiative and guide future trainings, develop a conversation toolkit and checklist for providers to use when engaging families, collaborate with the Chicago Public Schools Office of Diverse Learner Supports & Services around evaluating children in Austin community child care programs and work with evaluator to analyze data collected from the child care providers to measure the effectiveness of training and coaching.

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- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI): In Q2, BPI will conduct the final professional development training that focuses on trauma for this year. They will also host a workshop dedicated to reflection and planning for the upcoming year. Additionally, BPI will train the newly hired Family Liaison. Once the Family Liaison has been trained, they will conduct a Family Needs Assessment and use knowledge gained from the Family Needs Assessment to plan summer outreach activities. Once the Family Needs Assessment data has been gathered and analyzed, BPI will share the findings with the Coalition and share their summer outreach plan.